

# A New Season

A Ministry Report of the Roberts Family

## Dear Friends and Family,

10 years ago this month, our family moved to Zambia to begin an exciting life of overseas ministry. Just over 3 years ago we returned to the States to seek what the Lord had for us next. These last 3 years have been a huge adjustment for our whole family. And while I won't go into all that we've had to unpack and process, I wanted to send you as transparent an update as I can, so that you will know how absolutely faithful the Lord has been, as well as how you can pray for us.



## Our Healthy Homecoming

When Kerri and I were getting ready to leave Zambia in 2014, we both distinctly remember having a conversation about how we weren't going to be another missionary family who came home from the field broken and in need of healing. So, we stood in our kitchen in Mazabuka and committed to one another that we would be a healthy family and go back to the States ready to pursue the next season of life with joy!

It turns out we were a bit clueless as to our own spiritual and emotional health. We were, in fact, those broken missionaries. In addition to this, I think some of the isolation we experienced being out in the bush of Africa had taken its toll on me. I was struggling with a bit of depression, and bitterness and unforgiveness had taken deep root in my heart. I really thought I just needed time to be away from it all and to reflect on everything that had happened.



While it's good to take some time to reflect and process life's victories and defeats, it's also important not to let that time be an excuse to avoid dealing with issues head-on. And that's what I was doing. The more time I had to myself, the more bitter and detached I became. I was stuck in a cycle that was headed nowhere fast!

## Turning the Corner

I'd like to say that I figured things out and my life quickly turned around, but that would be a lie. The truth is that I was in this dark place for nearly two years!

I'm a pretty even-keeled person and I never thought that I would battle with depression. A little over a year ago, I reached a tipping point - a place where I just couldn't bear it any longer. As I cried out to the Lord, He answered my call! It started through advice that I received from a friend and counselor. He was able to help me understand that I was struggling with forgiveness because I had forgotten just how much God loved me and had forgiven me.

One evening, I went on a walk and just started praying. I cried out to the Lord and asked for His help. I had prayed a similar prayer several times before, but on this night I felt His tangible presence. The only way I can describe it was that He gave me His heart that night. The more I prayed, the more I found myself praying for those who had hurt me and asking Him to show me how *I* had fallen short in those relationships. God showed me that night that the starting place for experiencing forgiveness and freedom was through confessing my own short-comings and my complete need for the blood of Christ to cover them. The more I confessed those short-comings, the more free I became. God did a huge work of healing in my life!

## Calling

Since we returned from Zambia I've been struggling with calling. Why did God have us go to Zambia? God's not a wasteful God, so what was the point? How was He planning to use all that He had taught us in Africa to be effective back here in the States? And how did all this play into my vocation? Why did I end up back at my old job with the same company? Don't get me wrong, my job is a good job and I love the people I work with, but was Africa my training ground for this or something else? What's the bigger picture?

The more I prayed and asked the Lord for clarity, the more He began to show me. When we came home from Zambia, I needed time and space to decompress and heal. I was broken and empty. Being able to come

back to a familiar place and to a job I already knew, a job that didn't require me to take work home with me, allowed me this time. And it was a huge blessing because at the same time, it provided for our needs as a family! But as I've healed, I've sensed that this season is coming to an end - a happy end.



## Love Africa Mission

A few months ago I was approached by my good friend Nathan Smith, the president of Love Africa Mission. He asked me if I would consider joining the organization as chief operations officer.

**Love Africa's vision is to expose young people to God's heart for the nations that they might become passionate participants in the Great Commission by serving on teams, leading teams, supporting missions through prayer and finances and, for some, answering the call to full-time missions themselves.**

Over the last 8 years Love Africa Mission has sent more than 800 students and adults to serve on short-term mission trips in 5 African countries (including Zambia). This year, Love Africa is sending their first full-time missionary to Kenya - a testament to the long-term vision of the ministry.

It's a very exciting time for Love Africa Mission. The ministry has grown very quickly in a short period of time, and they want to capitalize on this growth. They need someone to help them who has experience in business and as well as missions work in Africa. For those who may not know, my education was in business, and before I was a missionary, I worked as a business analyst and consultant.

*"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."  
~ Frederick Buechner*

I read this quote recently and I think there is much truth in it. Ever since a summer mission trip to Kenya in 1995, the Lord has seared Africa on my heart. I don't know why, but He has!

When I think of a place where I experience deep gladness, it's in Africa. It's like my soul comes alive. And when I think about a ministry that matches this passion with my giftings, skills and experience, I see Love Africa as a perfect fit. I'm excited for the opportunity to serve the Lord through working for this ministry.

## The Path Forward

Love Africa Mission currently has the financing to cover a portion of my salary, but not all of it. If I'm successful in this new position, the ministry should grow and the ability to finance my position 100% will be there. So, accepting this position requires a step of faith, and in order to make it possible, we need help. I am asking that you would consider partnering with our family financially until the position can support itself.

Kerri and I operate on a tight budget. I'm not trying to make more money in the transition, just to cover my current salary + health benefits. Based on this, and the amount that Love Africa can cover, I will need \$3,900 in monthly donations to be able to make the move. Love Africa is a 501(c)3 non-profit charity. **All donations are 100% tax-deductible.** Would you please prayerfully consider partnering with us in this ministry?

**To setup an online donation,** please visit the link below or scan the QR Code with a QR reader:



<https://www.loveafricamission.org/Brent>

### To make a donation via check:

Make Check Payable to:  
Love Africa Mission  
PO Box 507 Belmont, NC 28012

\* Indicate whether the check is a one-time or monthly donation and for the ministry of Brent Roberts.

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*Behold, I am doing a new thing;  
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
I will make a way in the wilderness  
and rivers in the desert. ~Isaiah 43:19*